

Congressman Childers Releases Statement on Upcoming Health Care Reform Vote

Supports Reform, But Will Vote “No” Due to Cost to Mississippi Taxpayers, Federal Funding of Abortion

March 18, 2010

Washington, DC – Congressman Travis Childers (MS-01) released the following statement regarding his upcoming vote on health care reform legislation:

“Today, too many hard-working North Mississippians are struggling in the face of soaring premiums and unemployment that leaves them without coverage. I know how important health care reform is to the millions of people who can’t afford rising costs or simply don’t have access to quality care. But I also know how important it is to get health care reform right.

“After months of debate, I still don’t believe we’ve gotten it right, and I will not be able to support this legislation when it comes to the House floor for a vote. Some disagree with this decision, and I respect that. I want them to know that this has never been about political pressure from any party, organization, or special interest – for me, this has always been about doing what’s best for the people North Mississippi. Since the beginning of this debate, I’ve met and talked with thousands of constituents throughout the district. Their thoughts and concerns have been fundamental to my decision-making and I take them to heart.

“I have reviewed the bill and I remain deeply concerned about the legislation’s large price tag and the absence of sufficiently strong language to prohibit federal funding of abortion. While I voted against the last House health care reform bill, I supported the Stupak Amendment to prevent taxpayer dollars from being used to fund abortion. The current legislation lacks equally strong language.

“In addition, insurance companies, which are a large part of the problem, need to be a bigger part of the solution. Last month, I was proud to join an overwhelmingly bipartisan majority of my colleagues in voting to repeal the anti-trust exemption for health insurance companies. I would like to see similar bipartisan efforts to increase competition and lower costs for hard-working families.

“I hope that when the bill does come to the floor, it’s done so in the most democratic and transparent way possible. The legislative process is intended to support constructive debate and promote accountability. While certain processes may be acceptable for some issues, they don’t work for an issue with the wide-reaching implications of health care reform.

“Mississippians need a health care system that offers affordable premiums, ensures coverage for individuals with preexisting conditions, and provides equal access to care for individuals in rural communities. While I cannot vote for current House legislation, I remain committed to effective, fiscally responsible health care reform that makes sense for North Mississippi, and I will continue working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to that end.”

A pro-gun, pro-life Mississippian, Congressman Travis Childers (D-MS) represents the First Congressional District in North Mississippi. He is a member of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition and serves on the House Agriculture and Financial Services Committee. Congressman Childers co-chairs the reestablished bipartisan Congressional Rural Caucus and was appointed to the bipartisan Second Amendment Task Force. For more information, visit www.childers.house.gov

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